

ADDRESS BY MWALIMU JULIUS K NYERERE, CHAIRMAN OF CHAMA CHA MAPINDUZI,
AT THE OPENING OF THE ANC CONFERENCE, ARUSHA: 1 DECEMBER 1987

Ndugu Chairman; Comrade Oliver Tambo; Comrades and Friends.

This year we are celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the African National Congress. We celebrate its continued existence despite all the efforts to destroy it. It became an illegal organisation 27 years ago. But it still lives inside South Africa as well as in exile. It still leads the struggle for the freedom of South Africa, and for freedom in South Africa.

With pride in our common struggle I pay tribute to all those who have worked for freedom and human equality within the ANC, and in cooperation with the ANC, from 1912 until today. There have been, and there still are, great leaders of the Organisation, people whose names are an inspiration to all the opponents of Apartheid inside and outside South Africa; such men and women are so greatly feared by the leaders of apartheid that it is illegal to quote their words or even to mention their names inside the country. And there are millions - yes, millions - of people who have participated in the struggle against racism and whose names are known only to those with whom they worked and struggled - and too often died.

It is because of the resistance, and the active opposition, of all these people that the struggle for justice is still able to continue. Not all the might, the ruthlessness, viciousness and inhumanity of the South African racists has been able to subdue the ANC or defeat the cause for which it stands - human equality, justice and freedom. It is because of these efforts, and these sacrifices, that victory is coming - victory over Apartheid. And victory over organised inhumanity against people for being the colour they were born.

Victory will not be achieved today, nor tomorrow. But it is certain. There is no longer any possibility of defeat for the freedom struggle in South Africa; there is no longer any room for doubt about victory over Apartheid.

We have cause to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the ANC. We have not yet achieved victory. But we know that we shall do so. And we know that every day of the struggle brings that victory nearer.

2. The Struggle is Inside South Africa

Throughout these long years the struggle has been waged inside South Africa, by the people of South Africa. It has waxed and waned. There have been very many setbacks, until sometimes the faint-hearted despaired, and occasionally even the courageous retreated for a time into sullen resignation. But never was the flame of resistance extinguished. Always new people came to pick up the torch of freedom from those whose strength had been exhausted, and to carry it forward.

It is still inside South Africa that the struggle is being waged - and must be waged. No one from outside can bring real freedom to a Nation or a People. .

The struggle is carried on by all sorts of people, by all kinds of means, and everywhere - in the town, on the farms and the mines, and in the so-called Homelands. There are traitors, and compromisers, in South Africa as in every other struggle for freedom. But the vast mass of the people continue to resist. They refuse to acquiesce in their condition. They insist on surviving despite all that apartheid can do to them, and does to them. They keep alive the flame of freedom, and spread knowledge of it.

They resist openly when and where it is at all possible; they resist secretly where open opposition is to invite defeat. They organise, and reorganise when the organisation is infiltrated or discovered. They defend the latest victims of apartheid, and by their solidarity help them to endure. They commit sabotage. They strike; and they support armed struggle from among the people and with the people's backing.

Never has there been such a long-drawn out active struggle; never such apparently unending endurance as that of the South African people. We outside that country sometimes fear for them, and wonder how much longer they can carry on. But they do. On behalf of all Tanzanians I pay tribute to them, as well as to their Organisation, the ANC.

3. Support Must Come From Outside

We have among us today a few people who have come to Arusha from inside South Africa, and who will go back. Some are known to us all. Some do not want to be known. With humility as well as pride we welcome all of them. They are the front line fighters, who bear the brunt of the struggle. Every day they risk their lives, and daily they see - and share - the suffering of the people whom they love.

But most of us here live outside South Africa - in freedom, and spared the daily experience of racism. It is our job to give support to the struggle inside South Africa. We have to play our part by acting to weaken the forces of apartheid. We must help to strengthen all those who organise, or who, by whatever means, participate in opposition to apartheid inside South Africa. And we must help those who are engaged in the Armed Struggle against Apartheid.

All of us, in our own countries, have our own problems to contend with - sometimes very desperate problems. We in Africa in particular have to maintain the struggle for justice, for equality, and for freedom within the independent countries of our continent. We have to fight for greater economic independence and - at the moment - even for economic survival in a hostile world. The Front Line States also have to defend their own nations against the military and economic aggressions with which Apartheid seeks to strengthen itself. As we succeed in these endeavours we do, ourselves, inflict defeats on Apartheid. For the leaders of the racist state rejoice in our difficulties and our setbacks; they mourn, and try to prevent, every advance in freedom and justice made by the peoples of independent Africa.

But whatever our problems or our own difficulties, or our advances or setbacks, nothing can excuse us from actively supporting the struggle against Apartheid. We must be active in opposing it, by every means within our power. For the apartheid regime could not long survive if it was deprived of all external support, and all external acceptability.

4. What does this involve?

Ndugu Chairman: in this gathering of Anti-Apartheid activists from all over the world, it is not necessary for me to spell out the need for material as well as political, diplomatic, and moral support for the South African struggle. It is not necessary for me to spell out, once again, the arguments for international sanctions. All such questions, and how practical action can be taken to promote them, will be discussed in this Conference - in Commissions and in Planary Meetings. They will be discussed between the ANC, - the people who know their greatest and most urgent needs - and external friends who know best how to strengthen and expand support for the struggle in the circumstances under which they operate.

That is the serious business which is being combined with this Anniversary Meeting of celebration. And such a combination of business and rejoicing is essential. For while victory is certain if the struggle is maintained, victory has not yet been achieved. And the enemy is adopting new tactics in the face of the national and international forces which are increasingly ranged against apartheid. The enemy seeks to make us relax our efforts, and to divide all those who fight apartheid or oppose apartheid.

5. Abolition, not reform

It is a long time since members of the South African Minority Government spoke openly of their belief in the racial superiority of the white Man and the racial inferiority of the Non-White People of South Africa. They no longer talk publicly of educating Black children for the subservient role allocated to their Race. There are still white South African politicians who make such statements. But such things are not said by the official spokesmen of the South African Racist Regime. Even those members of Botha's Government who are said to be 'hard line' do not talk in these terms now. The language of Apartheid is becoming more sophisticated and the linguistic crudities are no longer being used - at least in public.

The Botha's in Government now claim to be opponents of Apartheid. And this process of refining Apartheid is being taken further. They have introduced a 'tricameral' Constitution, which incorporates people whom they classify as 'Coloureds', and others whom they classify

as 'Coloureds', and others whom they classify as 'Indians'. They have repealed the Mixed Marriages Act; they have allowed the establishment of legal Black Trade Unions; and they have changed the Pass Laws once again. And so on. So we are told these are 'reformists', and 'moderates' who need to be supported in their opposition to the 'extremists' in the White Community on their political Right. We are told by the Reagans and the Thatchers of this world that we should abandon the Armed Struggle, - which they call terrorism - and support the Government in its reforms. With our leaders in jail, and thousands of men, women - and even children - in detention, we are told that we should negotiate with the Apartheid Government to get more reforms.

Let us be quite clear. I do not believe that any genuine supporter of freedom and justice in South Africa likes the Armed Struggle. For almost fifty years the ANC remained committed to peaceful means of struggle. They organised demonstrations, processions, passive resistance, and educational campaigns; they suffered under racism without hitting back. They resisted without harming their enemies - only enduring their own imprisonment, torture and death, and the ever-increasing oppression of the South African people. Despite all the provocations, they held to this policy of non-violent struggle for almost five decades because the leaders and members of the ANC understood the evils of war. And they knew it is not easy after a violent struggle quickly to build democracy and justice for all.

But the violence was there - practiced against the Black people of South Africa. And their persistent calls for justice and cooperation in the creation of justice, were ignored or mocked. The ANC demand for a chance to work peacefully towards political and economic progress for all the people of South Africa was met by ever increasing violence and oppression. And the ANC, together with other nationalist organisations, was banned; those leaders who could not escape for awhile were arrested. President Reagan is not likely to be aware of this history of the ANC. Mrs. Thatcher has no excuse not to be aware of it.

The ANC was therefore forced to take up Arms. All other avenues of struggle were closed to it and to the non-whites of South Africa in 1960. I believe that the ANC will joyfully abandon the armed struggle once the need for it has gone. For the ANC is a movement fighting for freedom and justice, not a Movement of

thugs seeking to replace one racial tyranny by another. Unfortunately, the need for the Armed Struggle is not over yet. If a reform lightens the burden being carried by the oppressed people of South Africa, then we welcome it. If a change in the laws made by South African whites makes it possible, without entrenching apartheid, to have some kind of organisation which can fight apartheid, why should we not welcome that change? COSATU, and the South African Miners' Union are using their organisation to fight apartheid. They are therefore instruments of struggle regardless of the fact that they could become legal organisations only after the apartheid regime decided to change its laws about Trade Union Organisation. And when any prisoner is released undefeated - as Comrade Mbeki and others were released last month - we rejoice in their freedom and their continued courage.

All such events mark a little victory for the anti-apartheid Movements - internally and externally. They hearten us. For we know that they have occurred as the apartheid regime seeks to relieve the pressure it is now coming under, and to reduce the embarrassment felt by its friends as they continue to support it. But these events must not be allowed to deceive us.

All that these so-called 'reforms' amount to is an amelioration in the conditions of the Prison House which is Apartheid. The inmates of the Prison House - that is, the people of South Africa - remain prisoners. Apartheid was there long before Mandela and his colleagues were jailed; they were jailed by Apartheid. And Apartheid will not come to an end when all our jailed leaders are released by Apartheid. The repeal of some of the more crude laws of Apartheid may make life a little easier for the victims of Apartheid, but Apartheid itself will still be there, ready to re-impose those laws, and put the leaders back into jail, at any time.

Inside or outside a jail, the improvement of a prison diet, or a reduction in the prisoners' isolation, can make prisoners 'breathe better'; but they are still prisoners. Apartheid has to be abolished, not reformed. No attempt to make the people feel less oppressed under Apartheid is a substitute for its TOTAL ABOLITION. There can be no such thing as 'Apartheid with a Human

Face'. That would be a contradiction in terms, for apartheid is based on the denial of man's common humanity. Apartheid with any face or any colouring or any flavouring is totally inhuman and has to be totally abolished. You cannot change the nature of a Beast by dressing it up!

Apartheid will not be defeated until the Government of South Africa is made up of representatives of the people of South Africa - all the people.

6. By Armed Victory, or by Discussions?

Exactly how, and when, apartheid will be defeated we do not yet know. We only know that it will happen, and that until it does the struggle must be continued on all fronts. For the Armed Struggle is not an alternative to political struggle, any more than the political or economic struggle can at present replace the work of the Freedom Fighters. We are fighting a strong, well-organised and determined - as well as ruthless - enemy, who has strong external allies. We have to use all means of struggle against it, and take advantage of any opportunities for advance which occur on any front. It is the combination of political, economic, and military struggle which will bring us to victory.

In the end, therefore, we shall get to the position where discussions and negotiations can take place, and will have to take place, with the Apartheid authorities. But these discussions and negotiations can only take place between the people's genuine leaders - as free men and women - on the one side, and the Apartheid authorities on the other. Negotiations between Prisoners and Prison Authorities are not really about Fundamentals, and cannot be about Fundamentals. Yet the negotiations have to be about fundamentals - that is, about the abolition of Apartheid, and how the succeeding Non-racial authorities will take over effective political power. Anything else is a snare and a delusion. Nothing else could bring a chance for democracy and freedom for the South African people.

Such negotiations are not possible yet. But there will come a time when the South African racist government, and its institutions of military power, have accepted that racial government is no longer possible. Then they will accept the necessity to have discussions with the free leaders of the free People's Organisations about how the transfer of power takes place. This we know, and in their heart of hearts the intelligent ones among them also know. All

these 'reforms' are merely attempts to confuse the forces ranged against Apartheid, and to avoid the inevitable.

Until those negotiations are held, and concluded, and a Government of the People sits in Pretoria, the task of the ANC is to continue the struggle. And the task of Non-Racialists everywhere is to support them.

7. Political Power is only the Beginning

Political Power for the People of South Africa is the key to a non-racial and democratic future for that country. It will be achieved. But its achievement will only be the beginning. It will not by itself transform the social and economic conditions. For the racial, economic, and social structures which have been built up will not fall down, and all the effects of decades of racialism and oppression will not be wiped out, when the people take possession of political power through their representatives.

Nor will those who - internally and externally - now support apartheid on that day suddenly become supporters of democracy and equality and justice. There will be those among them who will try to cause, and will encourage where they do not have to create, chaos and lawlessness and acts of angry revenge. And there will be many - inside South Africa and even among those outside South Africa who do not like apartheid - who will complain when democracy and justice for all does not exist the day after a representative Government takes over the reins of political power. And the people themselves, after all their years of suffering, will be impatient for radical change - for relief from the desperate conditions in which they live - even while their young government is still struggling to create and use new and democratic instruments of government.

These things we must - all of us - recognise now. We must intensify our efforts to abolish apartheid. Those of us outside South Africa must continue to fight for sanctions against Apartheid; we must increase our practical support for the Freedom Fighters and the others inside South Africa who fight against the regime. But as we do so we must not try to pretend that the struggle for justice and democracy in South Africa will end on the day when the apartheid government is replaced by a Government of the People. For that new

Government will have urgent need of our support and understanding, especially in its early years.

I say it again: changing the structure of political power in South Africa is the first task. Building justice and human respect and democracy in a society which has for more than 75 years been based on oppression, domination and racial discrimination, is the second task. And it will not be an easy task.

We, the external opponents of Apartheid, must not shrink from that harsh reality and its implications. For the evil of apartheid is not solely that it is racism practiced by a tyrannical Government. The evil consists also in what has been done to the basic structures of the society. In a highly sophisticated economy, comparable in many ways with the economies in the developed countries, every aspect of human life has - since 1948 under the doctrine of Apartheid, but also long before that - been organised on the basis of racial privilege.

A Non-Racial Government must be established, and we must help the people of South Africa as they struggle to get it. But we must continue to support them as they begin the task of overcoming decades of educational, economic, and social disadvantage for the majority. We must continue to support them when they have to defend their new freedom from racism against the racists who refuse to accept it.

People all over the world will join the South Africans in their rejoicing when Apartheid is defeated. For that will mean that the struggle to build a just and democratic society in South Africa can at last begin.

May that day come soon.

In the meantime - A Luta Continua!